1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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Civil and military officers received no salary. The payment for their services took the form of a share in the booty of slaves, horses, or other property, made in the war by their household troops; of landed property and fiefs bestowed by the king upon his loyal servants; and, finally, of status and exalted social position linked with title and office. Every promotion to a higher rank, as it involved a larger measure of political influence, involved also claims to larger and more lucrative fiefs.

The *Ndeji*,' Father of the Town', is the head of the civil nobility. He is in charge of the affairs of Bida, and all reports or complaints are brought to him first. He is closest to the king, always about his person, the most powerful of all the officers of state because he 'has the king's ear'. He and the other civil rank-holders are the *shawaciši nya minin*, the Councillors of the Inner House, so called because they hold their daily *nkó* (council) with the king himself.

The *ena 'kū*, a creation of the kingdom, has no parallel in the village organization. Service in the war, open to every man in Nupe, nobleman or commoner, is compulsory for this class of professional soldiers. The 'war-ranks' imply tasks for experts, and special responsibility for the execution of these tasks to king and commander of the army. Thus the different titles have specialized meanings: the *Maiyaki* is the General-in-Chief, the *Uban Dawaki* and *Dokoyiringi* are in command of the main body of horsemen, the *Sokyara* is in charge of the mounted vanguard, the *Ejukó* of the archers, the *Sónkali* of the foot-troops, &c. The *ena Maiyaki*, too, holds its daily *nkó*, but not in the presence of the king. They, too, receive reports about the affairs of the town, and also of the country at large; but their main work is the discussion and preparation of military expeditions.

Only for the four or five highest ranks of the civil and military nobility is the order of precedence really rigid and generally valid. The significance of the remaining ranks changes frequently; bestowed as they are by the king on individuals to whom he owes gratitude or recognition for their services, they may lose their importance under another king, who has other, new men to reward and to distinguish. On pp. 100–1 is a list of the *saraki* ranks which exist in Bida to-day. Where possible I have indicated previous ranks and promotions, and also the first appointment under one or other *Etsu*.

The *ena manži* derives its name from the fact that the judicial and religious offices which it comprises are bestowed on Mallams, men of learning and scholarship. Profound knowledge of the Mohammedan literature, which is religious and juridical in one, is the only way to these ranks which are, like all other ranks in the kingdom, bestowed by the king. But the specialized training, the very necessity of finding a man of so special an education, limits the number of possible candidates. With knowledge and scholarship the office is handed on from father to son, political influence and power of certain families do the rest, and the result is that the offices of the *Alkali*, Judge, and *Liman*, Head of the Mohammedan clergy, become hereditary almost more rigidly than

served in Patigi. Or again, the highest military rank to-day is called by the Hausa name *Maiyaki*, instead of *Somasū*, which is the old Nupe title,

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country.[1] But villages and tribal sections were frequently involved in the wars of the kingdom, either themselves causing wars by rebelling against the central government, or being forced to take sides in the wars which the kingdom waged against other groups. Thus the Beni and Gbedegi sided with Bida against the rebellious Kusopa, and again in the Kyedye war, while other tribal sections, such as the riverain Bataci, Kupa, and Ebagi, came to the aid of the Kyedye. In the later times of the kingdom, to which my records chiefly refer, the wars were indeed largely caused by internal disturbances and were directed against rebellious provinces or feudal lords—being reconquests rather than conquests. Historical records mention ten major wars in the thirty years that preceded the British conquest, between 1864 and 1895. Most of these wars are still vividly remembered, and old men would even recall characteristic incidents in the various campaigns. My informants, not unnaturally, greatly extolled the soldierly virtues of the Nupe people. But there is also Barth's testimony that the Nupe army, especially the cavalry, was well known in the Hausa states.[2] Twice, in fact, (in 1880) the Nupe were called to Hausa to help their allies, the Emirs of Kontagora and Gwandu, to put down rebellions in their countries.

The Nupe army was comparatively loosely organized. It possessed only a small nucleus of regular troops, represented in the king's bodyguard; the rest of the army consisted of levies of slaves, volunteers, and mercenary soldiers, raised by the houses of the feudal nobility. But these household troops, too, were largely composed of trained and experienced soldiers.

The king's bodyguard comprised both infantry and cavalry. The foot-soldiers, called *dogari nya dakári* (i.e. 'guards on foot'), were equipped with guns or bows and arrows, and were under the command of the *Etsu Dogari*. The troops who carried guns were mostly slaves, the sons of slaves from the king's household, the others were free men, mercenary soldiers—among them many foreigners, from Hausa, Bornu, and Yoruba—who had taken service under the *Etsu* Nupe. Under *Etsu* Maliki this royal bodyguard numbered 80 men. The royal horse troops, a slightly larger group, were called *lefidi*, after the cotton-wool armour which they wore. Their weapons were swords, spears, and big leather shields. They were commanded by the *Etsu Lefidi* (who was also called *Zarmi*). One of my informants for the present description was the *Etsu Lefidi* of the royal house of Usman Zaki. He was of Hausa origin, a freed slave and the son of an *Etsu Lefidi* who had served under Usman Zaki himself. The horse troops were composed again of slaves and mercenary soldiers. The slaves who served in the royal cavalry were the sons of titled slaves, every court slave of rank having to send one of his sons into the *Etsu*'s bodyguard, and the volunteers were all foreigners. In the reign of *Etsu* Maliki the *lefidi* numbered 100 men.

The troops which were contributed by the various houses of the

[1] The only exception was the warlike Kyedye sub-tribe.

[2] Barth, op. cit. iv, p. 545. Lander reports that Mallam Dendo could 'command 1,000 horsemen, well equipped, and an uncountable number of foot-soldiers' (op. cit. ii, p. 296).

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nobility were of three categories: ordinary foot-soldiers, called *dakári*, foot-troops carrying guns, or *bindigaciži*, and horsemen, or *dokociži*. The *dakári* were composed entirely of volunteers, i.e. men who had entered the service of a feudal lord as soldier-*bara* or 'clients'.[1] They were all young men, and their ranks comprised peasants and townsmen, Nupe as well as foreigners. Every noble household had its own *Etsu Dakári*, Chief of the Foot-Troops, a *bara* of higher rank, who was in charge of these volunteers and responsible for their training. The *dakári* wore a sort of leather apron, called *walké*, and caps, and were equipped with shields and bows and arrows or spears. The troops which carried guns were, like the king's bodyguard, slaves. The cavalry represented the *élite* of the Nupe army. It was composed of senior *bara*—men whose sons might be fighting in the foot-troops—and younger relations, sons and brothers, of the feudal lord himself. The horsemen wore short shirts of strong coarse material, called *ewogí*, i.e. small gown, into which leather amulets were sewn, caps or turbans, and, over the *ewogí*, a *sulke*, a chain mail. They carried shields, swords, and spears. In the Kyedye war certain feudal lords could muster the following troops: the *Kusódu* 100 foot-soldiers, 200 guns, and 200 horses; the *Kpotũ* 100 foot-soldiers, 100 guns, and 20 horses; the *Ndeji* 100 foot-soldiers, 200 guns, and 10 horses; the *Benú* 50 foot-soldiers, 50 guns, and 20 horses; the *Waziri* 50 foot-soldiers and 5 horses. Many of the feudal lords—princes and civil nobility—would themselves join the army at the head of their household troops; but they would have to place themselves under the command of the 'professional soldiers'—the military nobility—who would join the troops in a body.

Warfare in Nupe possessed its etiquette, its conventions, and rules, which show how highly developed and specialized a technique it had become. Two kinds of war are distinguished: the great wars planned and organized by the central government, and smaller raids and military expeditions carried out by individual feudal lords. In the latter case, the feudal lord would request the permission of the *Etsu* for undertaking a campaign against this or that village or tribe. Without the sanction of the king his military expedition would amount to *cin ãmana*, a breach of the peace (lit.: devouring friendship), and might itself become the cause of a punitive expedition sent out by the central government. In the 'real' war, before hostilities are opened, a messenger of the king, called *kuru*, is sent to the enemy's camp to deliver the 'ultimatum', that is, to inform the enemy of certain demands of the kingdom the rejection of which would be followed by war. A titled royal slave of high rank acts as messenger. His person is inviolable—in theory; but during the Kusopa revolt three royal messengers were killed, one after the other, by the rebellious tribesmen. The next step is the appointment of a commander-in-chief of the armies, in the person of a royal prince who will then be known as *Nna 'Kũ*, Mother of War.[2] Sometimes soothsayers and Mallams are

[1] For the definition of *bara* and 'client' see p. 123.

[2] Owing to erroneous information I have mentioned this title as *Nda 'Kũ*, Father of War, in a previous publication (*Africa*, 1935). I must add that I was unable to obtain any explanation of this rather surprising matrimonial touch.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
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He may go out to war himself, but more often puts the operations under the War-Chief, Sarkin Yaki, who is himself advised by the Wari-Yaki, a man chosen by the Mallamai for this purpose, and often of so humble a position that the warriors do not know who he is. The Sarkin Yaki, however, obeys him invariably, and indeed it is the Mallamai who direct when and where an attack should be delivered or a retreat made. If the Sarkin Yaki should be killed in war, the army retires to await another appointment by the Emir. It was the custom for the two eldest daughters of the Sarkin Nupe to go to war, each arrayed in two thick rigas, a cummerbund, and carrying a sword and spear. They had large followings, for they gave a big proportion of the spoils to their retinue, but they followed the direction of the Sarkin Yaki. No woman was allowed to accompany them into battle, but many of the sex were discontented with the restriction, and, in consequence, the practice became unpopular amongst the Nupe men. The general feeling became so strong that on the death of the Chief, Umoru Majigi, in 1884, these ladies were no longer allowed to go out to war. Their names were Atiba and Wodiko, names invariably given to the Chief's two eldest daughters. In other respects they lived ordinarily, and were married, but their husbands would never fight in the same war with their wives. Each Chieftain brings his following, and there are bodies of horsemen and footmen, the former armed with spears, the latter with bows and arrows. A war-camp is formed some seven to ten miles from where hostilities are expected to take place, and here the stores and women are left. The Mallamai and a large number of civilian hangers-on advance to the verge of the fight, and wait till success is attained, when they dash in to secure a share of the spoil, the Mallamai giving the word when it is safe to do so. Needless to say their presence is often resented. Envoys may be sent from one army to another in perfect safety, protected by the waving of a white flag, or of green branches; they generally dress in white for additional surety.

Before any campaign is undertaken the Emir consults a Mallam gifted with the power of prophecy, and he says whether the results would be good or bad. A hundred years ago the advent of a fair race from the west was foretold by the prophets in a MS. still extant, and the resistance to their arms was forbidden. That was why the present Emir of Bida and his family, together with all the Mallamai, refused to come out against the British. There are some prophets who are above worldly interest and desire, and others who give advice for 1,000 cowries, or perhaps sixpence. It is a special art in which they receive instruction as youths, and there are books on the subject. The Mallams are consulted on such questions as marriage, trade ventures, and sickness. They look on the ground for about ten minutes and